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December 12, 1994

Your Grace:

Thank you for your informative letter of November 25th and for the wonderful book on the Holy Land. I was delighted to receive it and was happy to note that the Patriarchate has been able to publish such a beautiful book on the Holy Land from the Greek Orthodox perspective. I will use it to reconstruct our itinerary in the Holy Land in the photo-essay article which I am writing for the OCL publication--The Forum and for the Greek American newspapers. Copies will be sent to you as soon as they are published. It is too bad that the proceeds of the sale of the book accrue to the Patriarch rather than to the Patriarchate itself. Nonetheless, I am happy to have it and I am most appreciative to you for it.

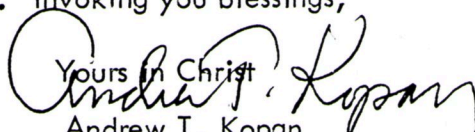
As you will note, I have written to Metropolitan Vassilios. I have enclosed a copy of the letter for your perusal, along with enclosures that I sent him. It is a frank but respectful letter in which I alert him of our concerns over the situation prevailing at the Patriarchate and have requested that he intervene on your behalf. I do not expect him to do so but I wanted him to know of my sentiments in your situation. Shortly, I will be making a similar request to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Archbishop Iakovos of America. Also, we will be writing special articles on the conditions in the Holy Land with reference to the moral and financial situation there, for the Greek American press.

As mentioned in the past, we will be working on an agenda for your forthcoming visit to America to speak on this issue. We hope to finalize plans when the OCL Board of Directors meets for its quarterly meeting in Florida next month. I am sure the OCL president, Nick Karakas will keep you apprised of events. When you come to Chicago, you are welcome to stay at my home. We have a large home with private guest quarters, though I realize that you are also welcomed to Ms Petropoulis' home.

As requested, I have enclosed a copy of the modified itinerary of the pilgrimage though I believe my wife has already sent it on to you in her last general mailing to the pilgrims. As you will note, I simply made some sequential changes on the otherwise fine itinerary you prepared, in order to conform with the actual tour taken. I have also enclosed a wonderful review of the OCL book on Project for Orthodox Renewal (which I believe you have a copy), that appeared in the prestigious Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora published in America. Our book has been receiving excellent reviews, much to the chagrin of some of our hierarchy.

My wife continues to improve though she still has upper respiratory problems. Thank you for your prayers on her behalf and for the invitation to return to the Holy Land. Our thoughts are with you during this Christmas season as you face the problem of the "excommunication" placed upon you by the Patriarch. We pray that the Prince of Peace whose birth we are observing, comfort you and endow you with the courage and strength to persevere. Invoking your blessings,

Enc:
Please keep us posted.

Yours in Christ

Andrew T. Kopan
Professor Emeritus